

METHOD FOR HANDING OFF STREAMING MEDIA SESSIONS  
BETWEEN WIRELESS BASE STATIONS IN A  
MOBILE STREAMING MEDIA SYSTEM

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A method for performing a soft-handoff in a mobile streaming media system, and a method for performing a hard-handoff in a mobile streaming media system are disclosed. In the soft-handoff embodiment, the present invention detects that a channel quality between a mobile client and a first base station remains above a drop threshold and that a channel quality between the mobile client and a second base station increases from below to above an add threshold. The present embodiment then sends a first multiple description bitstream from the first base station to the mobile client and sends a complementary second multiple description bitstream from the second base station to the mobile client. This method thereby provides improved utilization of wireless bandwidth during soft-handoffs, in contrast to conventional systems where the same bitstream is transmitted from each base station. In both the cases of soft-handoffs and hard-handoffs, when a mobile client enters a cell whose base station has no free capacity, the base station may prevent call dropping by reducing the number of descriptions being served to the existing clients and thereby providing capacity (at least one description) for the new client. These methods provide improved utilization of wireless bandwidth during soft-handoffs, and reduced probability of service disruption during both soft-handoffs and hard-handoffs.